

Stream Corridor Protection and Maintenance

Winnebago County Soil and
Water Conservation District

A stream corridor refers to rivers, creeks, streams and the adjacent areas that water influences.

Why are stream corridors important?

Streams are among the most important natural resources, their complex ecosystem provides habitat for a diversity of species. Stream corridors have great social, cultural, and environmental value. Healthy streams create critical habitat for fish and wildlife, water for recreational activities, and in some cases drinking water for our communities.

Simple yet effective stream maintenance methods...

Stream corridors provide vital networks for wildlife and help filter out pollutants. Streams surrounded by a healthy mix of vegetation including grasses, shrubs and trees buffer the effects of surrounding land. Routine maintenance usually involves clearing and removing woody vegetation and other natural and man-made debris. When stream maintenance is undertaken with sound environmental practices, it can achieve both flood prevention and environmental protection. Regular maintenance of streams is not only more cost effective, but smaller jobs done on a regular basis are easier to manage and less disturbing to the environment.

Disturbances

Streams and their surrounding areas can be damaged very quickly, but it often takes much time and effort to repair this damage. Whether it be a natural event or a human induced activity, disturbances bring changes to stream corridors. Disturbances place stress on the stream and have the potential to alter its structure and impair its ability to perform key ecological functions.



Urban development is one of the leading causes of stream degradation. Development increases the amount of stormwater runoff because of impervious surfaces. Increased amounts of impervious surfaces reduces the amount of water that is able to infiltrate into our ground. Removing plant buffers along streams degrades the overall quality of the stream. Many types of native vegetation have deep roots that filter out silt and pollutants and hold the soil in place.

All Human activities have an affect on our regional water quality. Those actions that are capable of degrading any stream include:

- Channelization and culverts
- Urbanization
- Removing vegetative buffers
- Agricultural production
- Damming and logjams

What you can do:

- Maintain a strip of native plants and trees along the stream on your property
- Remove both natural and man made debris
- Apply lawn fertilizers and chemicals carefully: always follow the package directions
- Never dump sprayer contents into the stream
- Implement a "no spray" zone near streams
- Control invasive species
- Store animal pens or pollutants away from the stream
- Keep ATV's away from the stream
- Use permeable pavement on your property
- Build a rain garden
- Don't dispose of yard waste into the stream or stream corridor

Detention Basin Maintenance

Purpose of a detention easement

Detention basins are used to improve the quality of urban runoff from roads, parking lots, residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial sites, and to reduce peak stormwater runoff rates by providing temporary storage during larger storm events.

Things to be aware of...

- *Any obstructions of the inlet or outlet?*
- *Has trash accumulated in the pond or on the rack?*
- *Any erosion or instability on the slopes?*
- *Any sedimentation in the basin?*
- *Any settling of the bermed areas?*
- *Any animal burrow holes?*
- *Are there any upstream or downstream conditions that could affect pond operation?*

Dos and Don'ts of detention basin Maintenance

DO

Inspect inlet and outlets regularly to ensure they are functioning properly.

Conduct necessary maintenance tasks.

Keep detention basin and screen and/or trash rack free from debris.

DON'T

DO NOT mow detention pond too close to the surface; height should be 4 to 6 inches to maintain healthy grasses.

DO NOT clean equipment or conduct maintenance on equipment in the detention pond, or near a storm drain or other stormwater conveyance feature.

DO NOT leave grass clippings or trimming residue in pond; collect and dispose of it properly.



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